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writers was the most unlovely." With such a statement as this before him there seems to be nothing for a reviewer to do but say that it would be very difficult to find any utterance more completely beside the mark. "Throughout this book (*Kreutzer Sonata*), as in all Tolstoi's work, is the eternal question *why*," continues the essayist. As a matter of fact, in the first autobiographical book of Tolstoi, in which he asks the great question *why* of life and its significance, he also tells us that he has found the answer. Life is explained when each man realizes himself as a part of an infinite whole. Again, and decidedly at the expense of the great writer, Mr. Phelps says of the Countess Tolstoi: "She became an ideal wife and shared in all his work, copying in her own hand his manuscripts again and again. In all her relations with the difficult temperament of her husband she exhibited the utmost devotion and that uncommon quality which we call common sense."

It is difficult to judge between a husband and wife, and no one would be bold enough to suggest that a genius moves easily in the marital bonds; when one adds to genius an ascetic temperament, totally unworldly ideas, and an attempt to adjust life to a literal interpretation of Christian teaching, one trebles the difficulties. Whoever has read the whole voluminous life and letters realizes that Countess Tolstoi was a kind, worldly, well-meaning woman, who adored her husband and had no patience with his ideals. She thwarted him at every turn, even going so far as to threaten to call in the law against him in one instance. She had, indeed, common sense—*i. e.*, the perceptions of average man, but why common sense is more commendable than a common mind or common manners we fail to see.

The essay on Dostoevski shows effort on the writer's part to do justice to a type of literature with which he is totally unsympathetic, and the essays on Kuprin, Chekhov, Artsybashev are valuable as practically introducing these writers to American readers.

As a whole, the criticism is at once arbitrary and conventional. The standards of judgment are those of the average man in the street, and yet they are used in a wilful manner, quite as if the professional critic were justified in setting up and holding to such standards. The book is printed on shockingly cheap, bad paper.

LEARNING AND OTHER ESSAYS. By JOHN JAY CHAPMAN. New York: Moffat, Yard & Co., 1910.

Those who remember Mr. Chapman's fine essay on "Learning" which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* about a year ago will now be glad to have it and others in book form, for this essay is one of those *multum in parvo* writings that help to keep alive the tradition, history, and actuality of scholarship and culture. Of course the value of this or of any essay depends upon the quality of the "experiencing mind" to which it appeals, but surely all who care for Life on its most powerful and lasting side—the side of ideas and ideals—must rejoice in those who have vision enough to perceive the truth and courage enough lovingly to set it forth, for, to make the task doubly difficult, there are many nowadays who feed themselves and us on crass flatteries. Instead of holding the mirror up to our average American life, showing us the true picture and enabling us to improve, these good folk tickle their itching ears and ours with high-

swelling words and misleading adjectives. It is not our pinchbeck politicians only who keep assuring us that we are great and mighty and all-sufficient, and can be and ought to be a model and law unto ourselves. To hear some of them talk, one would suppose that there is no such thing as cause and consequence, and that history had never been written for our edification and warning. What these partly informed and unthinking people promote is, not a desire for improvement, but a national self-satisfaction that is most dangerous; for self-satisfaction, whether in individuals or in nations, is the last and worst estate of the lost. To be self-satisfied is to preclude the possibility of mental and spiritual motion or advance, and this is to be practically dead. The American is naturally idealistic, and given half a chance he will make good his birthright and will do valiantly and well. He instinctively does desire the best, and would fain achieve it, but his counselors and leaders are not always wise. In our vaunted material greatness, with its accompanying commercialization of every department of life, lies our present-day danger. Seek ye first material advantage and success, and all other things will be added unto you, is the virtual advice that one hears far too often; so that even education, which means spiritual as well as mental development, is coming to be judged by this same rule-of-thumb notion of mere worldly success. And yet writ large over individual life and history is the searching and eternal question, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" It is this menace to mental and spiritual values that has aroused many of the best and most capable among us, and is leading them to utter wholesome and timely words of warning. Our material life is becoming ever more and more complex, its interrelations are becoming more and more delicate, intricate, and less easily adjustable. Only the finest and most comprehensive mental and spiritual development, therefore, can face some of our immediate problems and rightly master them. At this juncture, then, to minimize mind and spirit, and to over-emphasize the material is to invite failure. So to do means that there will inevitably come a day, and that not far distant, when mind and spirit would find themselves inadequate to the needs of even material living. Such days have been in the history of the race, when both men and nations were weighed in the balances and found wanting. To invert values, to mistake the less for the greater, is to court irretrievable disaster, and Mr. Chapman does well to put his finger, as do others, on the mental and spiritual inadequacy which is displayed in certain educational quarters.

The other noticeable essays in the volume are the one on "The Drama," on "Dr. Howe"—a loving tribute—and "The Influence of Schools," which is perhaps as significant as any. Not what a man is actually and quantitatively taught, but what he is induced to *learn*, the intellectual interest with which he is inspired, are the better parts of education; not what he actually achieves, but what he aspires to, places the man; not actual information so much as a quality and condition of mind that is more or less accessible to all knowledge is what makes a man valuable to himself and others.

Le moi qui fait, qui pense, qui est, is forever more than a mere trader. To begin life with a dominant idea of effort to be put forth for value received is to spike one's guns before going into battle, is to go into life *hampered* and in a condition that precludes any lasting and real joy or high achievement. Mr. Chapman stands for this somewhat neglected truth.